

An Article from The WINDS:

The American Heritage Rivers Initiative Program

Ostensibly presented as a way to restore the nation's 3.5 million miles of rivers and streams, the initiative contains wording that implies that it could actually be a means for the federal government to regulate the country's waterways and even more.

The innocuous sounding proposal may well be much more ominous than it appears on the surface. The initiative goes beyond the regulation of rivers alone to include communities and whole watersheds.... Considering that the Mississippi River watershed drains nearly 40 percent of the continental United States, it could have a monumental impact on the country.... At issue as well is the designation process for rivers which entirely circumvents the state legislatures. Any group or individual can nominate a river and, without legislative approval, that portion of state or private land comes under the jurisdiction of the "river community." There are no built-in limits to the size of the river community, which is an undefined entity. The initiative requires partnership agreements to be instituted between the federal government, local and regional government and the river community.

The document also discusses implementing SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, the United Nations veiled terminology used extensively in their document for the emerging world government, AGENDA 21.

This initiative, if implemented, would change the constitutionally protected policies that govern the nation's waterways... (A)n initiative can be listed in the Federal Register and, after allowing for a period of public comment, if no legislation opposing it has been introduced, the initiative becomes a binding regulation, carrying the same effect as law. In this case, the CEQ (Council for Environmental Quality) an agency of the Clinton Administration, listed the initiative but allowed only a brief period for public comment and did not file the required environmental impact statement.

After broad-based opposition, the CEO and the White House. . agreed to extend the comment period 60 days.... (T)he CEQ rationale for not extending the comment period 90 days (as required) was that they did not want to delay the process the applicants (for AHRI) are undergoing. Incredibly, the White House and the CEO are proceeding as if the initiative had already been granted approval. They have already enrolled applicants into the unsanctioned program.

This proposal bears similarities to the action which the President took last year in what many are calling the Utah land grab. Mr. Clinton invoked the 1906 Antiquities Act to declare nearly two million acres of Utah land to be a National Monument. This massive land acquisition came not as a result of legislation, but simply by Executive Order. The land includes hundreds of thousands of acres of private land and 200,000 acres of State Trust land....

With more than 50 percent of the land in western states already under federal control, is there need to increase the already excessive domination of lands by the federal government?

Most Americans want to preserve their natural heritage, but the heavy-handed tactics which the government has been employing are inconsistent with true American heritage.... The Administration has chosen its words carefully when describing this AHRI plan. They talk of preserving our heritage, enhancing our enjoyment and protecting our future. But if we examine the real intent of this and other seemingly benevolent programs, it becomes apparent that the actual effect is to relentlessly destroy our true heritage.

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